
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION(S)

Submitted by:
Tahoe Basin Fire Chiefs_

Finding: *(i.e., Conclusions reached after investigation and/or evaluation of facts)* **The level of wildland fire protection on California SRA is below the basic 24/7 all-risk standard experienced elsewhere in California.**

Background and Supporting Evidence: *(A short statement justifying the Finding and describing desired outcome(s); usually no more than half a page.)*

As a result of the "balance of acres" arrangement between Cal Fire and the LTBMU, the property owners on the California side of the Lake Tahoe Basin receive services at a level which are lower than the standard elsewhere in California.

In other areas of California, property owners on SRA receive 24/7 all-risk protection by Cal Fire. In many cases where there is an organized fire protection district, the two agencies cooperate delivering programs including fire prevention and multi-hazard fire and rescue services. The lead on multi-hazard structure fire and rescue services comes from local government and wildland fire protection comes from Cal-Fire.

In many cases local government's ability to provide statutory mandated services is constrained by the shift of local property tax dollars to the State of California (ERAF). This leaves a reduced ability to participate in 24/7 wildland fire protection.

The LTBMU generally operates in 10-12 hours shifts with after hour response times exceeding that which would otherwise be provided by Cal Fire. If a vegetation fire occurs after the LTBMU is off shift, local government is relied upon by Cooperative Agreement for initial response. So long as local government is available to assist the arrangement has managed to work over the years. However, should local government not be available, an unacceptable amount of time can occur before initial attack forces arrive on scene of the fire by out of area auto and mutual aid forces.

Our conclusion is the "balance of acres" arrangement between the LTBMU and Cal Fire is no longer acceptable for the California SRA. Aside from delayed

response after hours, ie., a structure fire getting into the wildland, no fire prevention assistance occurs in the enforcement of California PRC 4291.

Recommendation(s) *(Based upon an analysis of the Finding, the following recommendation(s) should be made to the Governors):*

Option #1 – Recommend the LTBMU change staffing patterns to 24/7 and more equitably distribute engines to reduce response times to the north shore. The LTBMU would further institute prevention activities similar to that which Cal Fire would do if the “balance of acres” arrangement were not in place.

Option #2 - The State of California consider reviewing the level of service on California SRA in the Tahoe Basin and adjusting it to a level that is comparable elsewhere in California. This could include placing engines on the north and south ends of the Lake 24/7 during declared fire season and instructing those engine companies (and potentially forester positions) to participate in PRC 4291 inspections in cooperation with local government.

Option #3 – The State of California and LTBMU eliminate the balance of acres arrangement and Cal Fire resume services in the Tahoe Basin with service levels and resources comparable to elsewhere in California..

Impacts of Implementation: *(The implementation of any Recommendation is likely to have specific impacts. Consider potential consequences related to each of the following areas):*

Analysis of impacts on the following factors is REQUIRED (Best Estimate):

- ☐ Cost
- ☐ Funding source
- ☐ Staffing
- ☐ Existing regulations and/or laws

Analysis of impacts on the following factors is OPTIONAL:

- ☐ Operational
- ☐ Social
- ☐ Political
- ☐ Policy
- ☐ Health and Safety
- ☐ Environmental
- ☐ Interagency